

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

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USDEL SALT TWO GENEVA

USDEL USSCC GENEVA

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AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

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TAGS: PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: ARBATOV ON SOVIET-U.S. RELATIONS

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REF: MOSCOW 10975

1. SUMMARY. IN A 40-MINUTE NATIONAL TELEVISION INTERVIEW, USA INSTITUTE DIRECTOR ARBATOV CHARACTERIZED THE THIRD SOVIET-U.S. SUMMIT AS SIGNALLING A STAGE OF "BUSINESS AS USUAL." HE DISCUSSED THE DOCUMENTS SIGNED AT THE SUMMIT IN SOME DETAIL, ESPECIALLY THOSE ON ARMS LIMITATIONS, AND REFERRED TO THE DANGER OF TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES WHICH COULD SET OFF A NEW SPIRAL AND THEREBY DESTABILIZE THE POLITICAL EQUILIBRIUM. AS EXPECTED, HE BLAMED CERTAIN CIRCLES IN THE U.S. FOR OPPOSING DETENTE AND CHARGED THAT CRITICISM OF THE PRESIDENT FOR LACK OF GREATER RESULTS WAS INCONSISTENT. HE CONCLUDED WITH A DEFENSE OF MOSCOW'S DETENTE POLICY AS CONSISTENT WITH MARXIST PRINCIPLES. END SUMMARY.

2. GEORGY ARBATOV TALKED ON PRIME-TIME TELEVISION (7P.M.) ON JULY 24 ABOUT THE PRESENT STATE OF SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS FOLLOWING THE THIRD NIXON-BREZHNEV SUMMIT. IN GENERAL HIS DISCUSSION PARALLELED THAT IN HIS JULY 12 IZVESTIA COMMENTARY (REFTEL), BUT WITH MORE DETAIL.

3. HE BEGAN BY NOTING THAT THE THIRD SUMMIT HAD BROUGHT PROGRESS IN MANY AREAS, PARTICULARLY ON ARMS LIMITATION, ON SECURITY IN EUROPE, AND ON THE MIDDLE EAST. COMPLEX QUESTIONS REMAIN, BUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS SUMMIT WAS THAT IT CONTINUED AND STRENGTHENED THE PROCESS OF NORMALIZING RELATIONS AND REDUCING TENSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE FIRST SUMMIT WAS A DRAMATIC EVENT, THE SECOND WAS IMPORTANT FOR THE AGREEMENTS SIGNED, AND THE THIRD SHOWS THAT THE TWO SIDES HAVE REACHED THE STAGE OF "BUSINESS AS USUAL."

4. ARBATOV NOTED THAT AMONG THE DOCUMENTS SIGNED WERE SEVERAL ESTABLISHING THE MACHINERY FOR COOPERATIVE EXCHANGES IN SEVERAL AREAS. IN SPECIFIC TERMS, THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES OF THIS SUMMIT CONCERNED ARMS CONTROL. ARBATOV DESCRIBED THE ACCORDS WHICH WERE SIGNED AND SAID THAT THE MAJOR ISSUE NOW WAS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO LIMIT THE QUALITY OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. FOLLOWING A KEY POINT FROM HIS IZVESTIA ARTICLE (REFTEL, PARAGRAPH 6), HE SAID THAT NEW TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS COULD LEAD TO A FURTHER STAGE IN THE ARMS RACE, WHICH WOULD THEN CAUSE FURTHER POLITICAL PROBLEMS. THE TWO SIDES SHOULD THEREFORE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PRESENT SITUATION, IN WHICH FURTHER PROGRESS ON BOTH THE TECHNICAL AND THE POLITICAL LEVELS IS

POSSIBLE. IN THIS CONNECTION HE CITED BREZHNEV'S JULY 14 STATEMENT ON THE RISKS OF A FURTHER ROUND OF THE ARMS RACE.

5. HE ACKNOWLEDGED, HOWEVER, THAT FURTHER STEPS WILL BE DIFFICULT BECAUSE OF THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED ON BOTH SIDES, THE COMPLEXITIES OF THE PROBLEMS, AND THE INHERENT OPPOSITION WHICH EACH STEP CREATES. ALTHOUGH A LARGE MAJORITY OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE FAVOR DETENTE, SOME CIRCLES REMAIN OPPOSED (THE MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX, THE FAR RIGHT, THE ZIONISTS). BEFORE NIXON'S VISIT, THERE WAS A BIG CAMPAIGN CHARGING THAT THE "COMPLICATIONS IN THE DOMESTIC ATMOSPHERE" MEANT THAT THE PRESIDENT COULD NOT - AND DID NOT HAVE THE RIGHT TO - SIGN FURTHER AGREEMENTS. AFTERWARDS, HOWEVER, HE WAS CRITICIZED FOR NOT ACHIEVING GREATER RESULTS. THIS INCONSISTENCY SHOWS THAT PROBLEMS EXIST NOT ONLY BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BUT WITHIN THE U.S. ITSELF.

6. ARBATOV CLOSED WITH A STRONG STATEMENT TYING MOSCOW'S PEACE POLICY TO MARXIST PRINCIPLES. THE STRUGGLE WILL GO ON, HE SAID, BUT THE RECENT AGREEMENTS AND THE DEGREE OF COOPERATION RECOGNIZE THE OBJECTIVE REALITIES OF THE PRESENT EPOCH.

7. ARBATOV'S PRESENTATION WAS POISED AND AUTHORITATIVE. HIS OVERRIDING EMPHASIS WAS ON THE PROGRESS TOWARDS NORMALIZATION IN STATE TO STATE RELATIONS. HIS REMARKS ON THE DANGERS OF FURTHER TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCES IN WEAPONRY UNDERLINE THE NEED FOR THE TWO SIDES TO SEIZE THE MOMENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO GO FORWARD. HOWEVER, BY OUTLINING THE DIFFICULTIES HE MAY HAVE INTENDED BOTH TO REDUCE EXPECTATIONS OF RAPID ADDITIONAL STEPS AND TO UNDERLINE THEIR SIGNIFICANCE WHEN THEY DO COME. STOESEL

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